

## TRIBAL PROGRAM NEWS

### Tomatoes vs. To-mah-toes – Perception is a Tricky Fruit

by DeAnna Pearl, A&D Prevention Coordinator

Did you know that tomatoes are actually a fruit? They are part of the nightshade family (like potatoes and eggplants), but they are served and prepared as a vegetable, which is why most people consider them a vegetable and not a fruit.

What does this all have to do with prevention? It's all in the perception in how one is taught about the world around them.

First let's define the three different features of perception:

- How you see things with your scope and frame of reference
- How you think others see things
- Truth within its context

What is reality or normal for one person is not necessarily a norm or reality to another. What is the acceptable norm in one community can be very different in another. For example, parents speak out about their expectations for schools and what their kids are exposed to, but those same youth go to a home with ATOD abuse.

According to Dr. Jeff Linkenbach, director of the Montana Social Norms Project, adults and youth often perpetuate misinformation not on purpose but in good faith. We are bombarded with tons of information every day and never question where it came from.

Positive social norming is a leadership model that seeks to grow positive norms and reduce the volume of negativity in the public conversations in a community. Prevention programs of the past have bombarded communities with numbers and percentages of negative behavior done by kids and adults.

These are scare tactics that work in a limited way and in some cases have been found to reinforce negative behavior. If parents and communities believe it's normal for youth to abuse alcohol, tobacco or drugs, people become apathetic to the effects of the harmful substances.

Historically, tomatoes have been used to feed the world like an ever-growing pot of spaghetti. On the flipside, they also have been used to harass and condemn when allowed to rot and be thrown.

We can seek to reduce serious problems, such as youth drinking, without focusing energy on fear and negativity. We can foster a change in cultural conditions that supports healthy behavior. Just by portraying healthy norms and the expected behavior results, we can influence youth and adults.

Please contact me at 541-444-8267 or 800-600-5599 if you have any questions or need information. You can read more about the Most of Us Positive Social Norm project at [www.mostofus.org](http://www.mostofus.org).

#### Myth vs. Fact

Myth: Most eighth-graders are smoking marijuana.

Fact: According to the Oregon Healthy Teen Survey, 87.2 percent of our eighth-graders stated they had not used marijuana in the last 30 days.

Myth: Abuse of alcohol by high school students is going up.

Fact: Abuse of alcohol by high school students is in fact declining.

Myth: There is more of a need for middle school prevention programming.

Fact: Abuse of alcohol by elementary students often starts as early as 8 years of age.

Myth: Kids don't care about the election.

Fact: Eight in 10 (84 percent) teens think it's very important to vote in elections.

Myth: More than 80 percent of parents believe kids don't have stress in their day-to-day lives.

Fact: More than 80 percent of kids who start to abuse drugs do so to deal with stress.

Fact: Most kids want to be successful.

Fact: Most kids want to have a normal life without the pressure of being perfect.

Fact: Most kids don't smoke tobacco.

Fact: Most kids don't drink.

Fact: Most kids do not abuse drugs.

Fact: Most kids want to help make a change in the world.

Fact: Most Elders want to help kids.

Narcotics Anonymous Toll-Free  
Help Line – 877-233-4287

For information on Alcoholics  
Anonymous: [www.aa-oregon.org/](http://www.aa-oregon.org/)

### TLC Attitudes of Gratitude

by Lynn Whitlow

We live in an age where it appears that, more and more, people want to be – in fact expect to be – entertained. If they aren't watching TV or DVDs on a screen, they are holding the controls to some type of video game.

Many form an addiction to this "play." Others want to be shopping at the "mall." If the stimulation from these activities is missing, then "boredom" sets in.

I remember this well when my son was a teen-ager and "plugged in" every waking moment out of school or it was, "Mom, I'm bored." He was not convinced when I'd tell him there is no such thing as "bored," only "boring" people and he was responsible for finding positive ways to spend his time.

Whatever happened to entertaining ourselves? Reading a book? Taking a walk (health and fitness as well as an entertaining activity)? Engaging in a hobby, craft or art?

Some of us are never bored. In fact we'd welcome a break to grab a book or magazine to read or just enjoy some quiet time. Watching TV or a whole movie is a seldom-enjoyed activity. Not that we don't want to, but we have so much life to live.

Get involved in life and do service that makes positive change in the community. Attend CEDARR or Siletz Valley Partnership meetings or those of a prevention organization in your community. Volunteer at the school, local library or your local food pantry.

There is nothing wrong with being entertained, but when it becomes an obsession in your life, it may be time to step away, get new involvements and help someone else out. Makes you feel good too – simulates endorphins.

TLC residents work at finding gratitude in their daily living. Some of their "thanksgivings" this month are: "For trying to keep a positive attitude. For waking up each day. For recognizing my behaviors. For my four sponsees. For my sponsor."

Other gratitudes include: "To have 20 months (clean and sober). For having my C-pap machine. For my counselor. For my son who turns 7 and being clean to celebrate his birthday! I'm grateful for my birthday party and friends coming over (7-year-old). For friends I can call on anytime and who helped me out when I was in need."

There are always things to be thankful for – every day!

We also are grateful to our volunteers – Alice McCain, a weekly volunteer, and Denise Riding In, who checks in to see how and when she can help out.

We appreciate so much Sammy Bayya, Bristo Bayya and Tony Whitehead, who helped us replace some light fixtures. We are benefiting from fitness and nutrition classes from Darcy Trego. All of us want to increase our wellness.

We want to invite women in the community to join our monthly Women's Talking Circle, an uplifting support for the participants. It happens on the second Wednesday of the month. Please call for more information, 541-444-8238 or 800-600-5599.

Smile – summer is almost here!

### Walt's Words of Wit and Wisdom

by Walt Klamath

By darn – had it all figured out, the writing all done and hit the wrong doggone button and somehow everything disappeared, again.

As most know, I do go into the prison system and do Sweat Ceremonies, well just present anyway. I have one of the inmates do the water pouring, usually the ones who are getting released first.

I have been to most of the prisons – Snake River, EOIC, Two Rivers. I used to go to these when I was hunting near Ukiah, but family, friends and my boss didn't like me hunting by myself. Little did they know how right they were.

Anyway, I would go to Two Rivers on the way, then about halfway through the season would go to Snake River. EOIC was a little different. They would not bend to let me in on the days available to me. The bad thing about the Ukiah area is that I wanted to hunt snow and the best snows came when I went to Snake River.

I haven't been to OSCIC since Chaplain Ferris retired, which has been several years now, I think. I have been going to Santiam monthly and OSH. Recently I have been asked to go to OSP to do two Sweats in one day, which is a little tougher for me. I had to cancel it for some reason, whatever reason it was made sense to me.

One thing I hear a lot about is the employment situation for those being released. For one thing, most are virtually homeless. The first thing is having an address and communication.

The second is the debriefing, getting back into a free living spirit. It takes time.

I remember being away from civilian life for two years and when I returned to life the way it was, it did not happen. The whole doggone world had changed and again, we had a lot of briefing of what we were to do in the service but no debriefing to get out. So we do need halfway houses to debrief and get back into a routine.

Again though, it's hard first because of reputation. It seems that most feel these inmates are stupid, ignorant, lazy and what have you. That is far from the truth, these people have more going for them than even they are aware of.

They are diligent, they are experts at handling crisis, they are determined, they have commitment and they have courage. Now with all that they really can't lose if given a chance to use their skills that most people will not ever have in all their lives.

They can wake up in the morning and have to have \$100, \$200 or \$300 by 4 p.m. – and they will have it. They will. Failure is not an option.

Of course there will be some who will not make it, same as there are everywhere else. Success is not a guarantee for all. But for the most part, I think that it pays to get these top-level brains working in a good way.

I personally know 13 people who are doing very well today in the secular world. Now if I know 13, there are more whom I haven't heard of. Of course, we don't hear of the successes, just like our own programs here. We can't say who is accomplishing their dreams.

These are my observations and also part of the Indian trainings that I attend. We are wasting so much talent, at least I think. I like to believe in our Indian people.